

News Clippings

3/28/08-4/1/08

FIRE

Indianapolis

Couple killed in overnight house fire

[Read the Article](#)

Shelbyville

City, fired firefighter settle

[Read the Article](#)

FLOODING

Columbus

Reporting flood damage

[Read the Article](#)

Indianapolis

Flood damage information needed

[Read the Article](#)

Louisville

Hoosiers with weather damage asked to call

[Read the Article](#)

Madison

Red Cross: Be prepared for flooding

[Read the Article](#)

FOUNDATION

Terre Haute

Scholarship presented in honor of Enrico Garcia Jr.

[Read the Article](#)



Couple killed in overnight house fire

Posted: March 31, 2008 07:06 AM EDT



Columbus Township Fire Chief Rodney Ferrenburg speaks to a crew of firefighters. (The Republic photo by Joel Philippsen)

BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY, Ind. (The Republic) - A house fire started by a cigarette early Monday morning caused the death of a husband and wife, fire and police officials said.

Bob and Nancy Bennett, 5212 Willa Way, died from smoke inhalation, Bartholomew County Coroner Larry Fisher said. Emergency dispatch received a call about the fire at 12:24 a.m. German Township Volunteer Fire Department, already out on another run, responded within six minutes. Columbus and Harrison townships also responded.



Chastity Norton hugs her second cousin Pam Shepherd after arriving to the scene. (The Republic photo by Joel Philippsen)

Columbus Township Fire Chief Rodney Ferrenburg said the fire was contained to the living room and was extinguished within 9 minutes of firefighters' arrival.

The husband and wife were transported to Columbus Regional Hospital. Bob, 74, was pronounced dead on arrival at 1:04 a.m., and Nancy, 72, was pronounced dead in the emergency room at 1:08 a.m., Fisher said.

Ferrenburg said no smoke detectors were located in the one-story, ranch-style house in Lowell Addition.

The emergency call was initiated by Debra Stout, the Bennett's daughter who was visiting. The fire started accidentally by a cigarette on a sofa. Fisher said Bob had been known to smoke while sitting on the sofa.

Stout escaped the house, and Bob also did, but he went back in to help his wife, who was confined to a wheelchair, Fisher said. Bob was overcome by smoke while trying to save Nancy.

Indiana State Fire Marshal's office is assisting with the investigation, and Bartholomew County Sheriff's Department and Columbus Police Department assisted at the scene.

-- From WISH-TV news gathering partner [The Republic](#)

[Back to Top](#)

3/28/2008 2:30:00 PM

City, fired firefighter settle

Agreement allows Pile to keep job after six-month unpaid suspension

Ron Hamilton
Staff writer

Shelbyville firefighter Isaac Pile will keep the job he's had the last eight years, but he must serve a six-month unpaid suspension and a two-year probationary period, according to a deal brokered and agreed upon by Pile, his attorney, the fire chief, the city attorney and officials with the city's board of public works and safety.

"We could have turned down the agreement and ordered the dismissal hearing to continue, but we think it's an equitable agreement for all sides concerned," said Mayor Scott Furgeson. "We think it works best for the fire department and the citizens of the community."

The agreement was to the disciplinary terms in regard to a firefighter's actions in an emergency medical run on Feb. 18. According to Pile's attorney, Matt Langenbacher, his client made a procedural mistake by giving a higher-than-required voltage cardiac shock to a patient. He compounded that mistake by failing to document it properly and inform medical officials at Major Hospital.

"The patient at the time needed an electric shock to get the heart to beat slower," the attorney stated two weeks ago. "Pile started on the second level, when he probably should have started on the first. He documented the fact that he sedated the patient, but not that he had set up the patient for an electric rhythmic shock."

Langenbacher noted that when Pile later remembered the lapse in documentation on the run sheet and approached his supervisor about it, he was written up for the mistake. He also emphasized that the patient suffered no ill effects from the shock and has recovered properly.

On March 3, members of the board of works voted unanimously to accept Fire Chief Todd Anderson's recommendation for Pile's dismissal. The chief told city officials that his investigation revealed "neglect of duty, immoral conduct, conduct injurious to the public welfare and conduct unbecoming a firefighter." Pile then requested the hearing, which was scheduled for Thursday morning. However, no hearing took place since a premeeting agreement already had been hammered out by all parties concerned.

Pile, whose wife is about to give birth to their first child, referred all questions to his attorney, who said his client "is certainly willing to take responsibility for his actions and get corrective training to make him a better employee."

"It's a fair agreement," Langenbacher said. "The department has very, very high standards, and I don't think that will change. It's just a matter of a good and fair way to handle this situation. They will be taking some necessary corrective actions in regard to Mr. Pile."

Those corrective actions will include the following terms:

- Pile must serve a six-month unpaid suspension.

- He must serve a two-year probationary period, during which time any violations of rules, policies or protocols may result in punishment up to, and including, dismissal.
- He must forfeit any specialty positions, such as mechanical, arson investigation and safety instruction, and be removed from the officer training program. He may reapply after serving the two-year probationary period.
- He must take courses in cardiology and advanced cardiac life support at St. Francis Hospital in Indianapolis beginning in early April and pay for the classes himself.
- He must undergo department remediation, which will include review and testing over protocols, report writing, EKG patient care, standards and interpretation.
- He must work six months partnered with a paramedic on a medic truck, during which time he will be limited to operating only with supporting medics.
- He must personally write letters of apology for his actions to three doctors at Major Hospital as well as all members of the city fire department.
- The details regarding the particular run and the disciplinary actions taken in the case will become a permanent part of Pile's personnel file and be forwarded to the Indiana Department of Homeland Security EMS Division for review. Depending on the outcome of the state's investigation, the disciplinary agreement might have to be modified.

Copies of Pile's letters of apology were submitted to city officials at Thursday morning's scheduled hearing. The letters to the emergency room doctors state that he is sorry for his actions and that he failed to inform them correctly of the treatment he performed on the patient.

"It's clear that I need further training to make sure that I make the best possible decision for any further patients I would be encountering," the letter reads. "I feel this training will greatly improve my job performance in the future. All I can do now is learn from my mistake."

The letter also includes his regret at the decisions made on the run, and that he didn't pass along all of the information to emergency room personnel that was needed.

"It was a very confusing run for me and important information was not passed on to the people that needed to know," he wrote. "I am not trying to justify my mistakes. I take full responsibility for my actions on this run. It is my hope that I can regain your trust in the future by receiving further training so no other mistakes can be made."

Pile's letter of apology to his fire department heads and co-workers expresses his regret for "any embarrassment this may have caused the department and for putting the department in this bad situation."

"I made technical mistakes and followed that up with ethical mistakes," he wrote. "I regret doing this very much. I was wrong, and the department was right in punishing me. I have learned a lot from this situation."

[Back to Top](#)



3/29/2008 4:42:00 PM

Reporting flood damage

[Staff and Wire Reports](#)

Southern Indiana residents can contact a toll free number to report losses due to flooding.

Beginning March 31, residents affected by flooding March 17 and later can call 866-210-1925, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Indiana Department of Homeland Security will quantify the losses and determine if federal assistance should be requested.

Losses can include structural damage to homes and loss of personal property.

Callers will be asked to provide their name, address, phone number, damage to property and type of damage the property sustained. Callers also can give information about unemployment or business losses because a business was closed or damaged due to flooding. This can include employees and business owners.

For a form to help provide information, go online to in.gov/dhs.

[Back to Top](#)



Flood damage information needed

Posted: March 31, 2008 07:37 AM EDT

INDIANAPOLIS (WISH) - Indiana's Department of Homeland Security will begin gathering more information about this month's flooding.

Starting now, anyone affected by floods should call 866-210-1925. The toll free number will be open all week from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m.

Losses can include physical damage to your home and loss of personal items.

The department is trying to determine the amount of damage throughout the state since March 17. It will help the agency decide if federal aid should be requested.

[*Back to Top*](#)



Hoosiers with weather damage asked to call

THE COURIER-JOURNAL • MARCH 31, 2008

In an effort to calculate the losses in Southern Indiana from severe weather and flooding since March 17, the Indiana Department of Homeland Security is asking residents who suffered damage to call a toll-free number.

Residents can call (866) 210-1925 to report structural damage to homes and losses of personal property from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays. Information collected will be used to determine if federal assistance should be sought.

Callers will be asked to provide their name, address, telephone number, type of damage and business losses from damage or closing because of flooding.

[*Back to Top*](#)



THE MADISON COURIER

Your news leader for southeastern Indiana and northern Kentucky
Serving Madison, Jefferson and Switzerland Co., IN and Trimble and Carroll Co., KY

www.madisoncourier.com

3/31/2008 3:00:00 PM

Red Cross: Be prepared for flooding

Pat Whitney

Courier Staff Writer

More rain is expected over the next several days, adding more water to already swollen rivers and streams. Due to the severity of potential flooding in Indiana and the entire Midwest, the American Red Cross is advising that people take precautionary measures before being faced with impending disaster.

"It's important to have a preparedness kit stored and ready in a safe place," said Tiffini Mundt, director of the Jefferson County Chapter of the American Red Cross. "You can put one together yourself with supplies like first aid materials, a flashlight, a radio, a blanket and some extra clothes. It's also important to keep your important documents in a safe place and talk to your family about a potential crisis situation. If you're new to the neighborhood, you'll also want to check out if you live in a flood zone and consider getting insurance."

In 1997, severe flooding in Jefferson County and southern Indiana forced people to evacuate their homes. Many lost all of their belongings.

"There's no telling if we'll be faced with a situation like that again in the near future," Mundt said. "I can't stress enough that the more you plan ahead now, the better off you'll be."

The plan should consist of what to do and where to go in the event of an emergency, she said.

"Remember that especially with flooding, a large area could be affected - an entire community or an entire neighborhood - so part of your plan should at least be a contingency on a place to go outside of your community."

For Red Cross assistance, call (812) 265-3818.

Flood safety tips from the American Red Cross

Know what to expect:

- Know your area's flood risk - if unsure, call your local Red Cross chapter.
- If it has been raining hard for several hours, or steadily raining for several days, be alert to the possibility of a flood.
- Read The Madison Courier and its Web site, www.madisoncourier.com, for flood information. Listen to local radio.

Reduce flood damage by:

- Raising your furnace, water heater and electric panel if they are in areas of your home that might be flooded.

- Consult with a professional for further information about whether this and other damage-reduction measures can be taken.

Floods can take several hours to days to develop:

- A flash flood watch means a flood is possible in your area. Be alert to evacuate on a moment's notice.
- A flash flood warning means a flash flood is occurring or is imminent. Move to higher ground away from rivers, streams, creeks and storm drains if they are nearby. If your car stalls in rapidly rising waters, abandon it immediately and climb to higher ground.

Prepare a family disaster plan:

- Check to see if you have insurance that covers flooding. If not, find out how to get flood insurance.
- Keep insurance policies, documents and other valuables in a safe-deposit box.

Assemble a disaster supplies kit containing:

- First aid kit and essential medications.
- Canned food and can opener.
- At least three gallons of water per person.
- Protective clothing, rain wear and bedding or sleeping bags.
- Battery-powered radio, flashlight and extra batteries.
- Special items for infants, elderly or disabled family members.
- Written instructions for how to turn off electricity, gas and water if authorities advise you to do so. Remember, you will need a professional to turn them back on.
- Identify where you could go if you have to evacuate. Choose several places - a friend's home or another town, a motel or a shelter.

[*Back to Top*](#)

Published: March 28, 2008 11:13 pm

Scholarship presented in honor of Enrico Garcia Jr.

By Sue Loughlin

The Tribune-Star

TERRE HAUTE — The Indiana Homeland Security Foundation on Friday presented its first scholarship award in honor of the late Enrico Garcia Jr. of Terre Haute.

The presentation took place at the Indiana Statehouse as part of the annual scholarship ceremonies.

The recipient is Charles Heflin of Patoka. He is attending Vincennes University and plans to earn a bachelor's degree in homeland security and public safety.

Garcia, a highly decorated and diversely trained public safety professional, died Sept. 23 during a training exercise. He was 44.

He was serving with the Indiana Department of Homeland Security as a coordinator for response to incidents involving hazardous materials, weapons of mass destruction and terrorism.

His experience included fire and rescue, law enforcement, emergency management and hazardous materials.

Garcia's father, Dr. Enrico Garcia, presented the award to Heflin during Friday's ceremony.

"The family is very proud," Garcia said. "It makes me feel proud and sad ... why do we have to lose someone so young, with so much promise?"

He said his son was a very quiet person and never bragged about what he was doing. "Even I was surprised at a lot of things he accomplished," Garcia said.

The scholarship in his son's name will be given annually.

Heflin felt honored.

"I really didn't recognize the significance of it until I started talking to a lot of people at the Homeland Security office. They told how much of an impact Garcia made in his field of work," said Heflin, 39, who works full time and goes to school part time.

There was a special presentation in honor of Garcia and the scholarship named after him. "His contribution to emergency services was something special and well respected by everyone I've met up there," Heflin said. "I felt really privileged and honored to receive the award."

Heflin would like a career in emergency planning or emergency response and recovery, with longer term goals of becoming a post-high school emergency services instructor.

He volunteers with Patoka and Princeton fire departments and Gibson County Emergency Management Agency.

Joe Wainscott, IDHS executive director, said Garcia "was a valued member of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security and a credit to the state of Indiana ... He exemplified that service in public safety is much more than a profession, it's a mission. Today, as in other days, we recognize him as a hero. This scholarship will continue to honor him."

Garcia was one of the first in Indiana to receive an internationally accredited hazardous materials certificate. He had earned degrees in information technology and business administration, and held all but two master firefighter certifications through the state of Indiana.

He was trained and had years of experience in counter terrorism, incident command, bomb crime scene investigation, weapons of mass destruction, Special Weapons and Tactics forces (SWAT), field chemical and biological analysis, clandestine drug labs and much more.

Garcia taught at Indiana State University and Ivy Tech Community College. In addition, he was a martial arts instructor with specific application to law enforcement, tactical teams, military personnel and bodyguards.

Garcia also helped build multi-disciplinary, multi-jurisdictional response teams. He co-founded Task Force 7, which includes fire/rescue, law enforcement, hazardous materials, health departments, emergency management and other professionals from Vigo and surrounding counties.

The foundation scholarship is funded through purchase of Secure Indiana license plates dedicated to public safety.

Sue Loughlin can be reached at (812) 231-4235 or sue.loughlin@tribstar.com.

[Back to Top](#)